

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and continued examination of this application in view of the amendment and the following remarks. Claims 20-29 and 32-51 are pending in this application.

1. Status of the Claims

Claims 1-19, 30 and 31 have been canceled. Claims 20 and 23 have been amended. Claims 32-51 are new. Support for the amendments is described below:

20, 48:	FIGS. 2-3 and 11-12; page 2; and page 15, line 14 - page 16, line 7;
23, 46-47:	page 2
32-35, 44, 45:	page 3, lines 1-4 and page 8, line 20 – page 9, line 22
36-43, 49-51:	FIGS. 8-9 and 11-12; page 14, line 15 - page 17, line 15

2. 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) Rejections

Claims 1, 2, 4-15, 18-25 and 28-31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 3,707,792 to Mabrey et al. ("Mabrey") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,636,463 to Sharon et al. ("Sharon"). Claims 17 and 27 were rejected as being unpatentable over Mabrey in view of Sharon and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,178,678 to Stoddard ("Stoddard").

Claims 1-16, 18-26 and 28-31 were rejected as being unpatentable over Sharon in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,419,978 to Ostrand ("Ostrand"). Claims 17 and 27 were rejected as being unpatentable over Sharon in view of Ostrand and further in view of Stoddard.

3. Claims 20-29, 32-38 and 48 are Patentable Over The Prior Art

Claims 20-29, 32-38 and 48 require that the display members be removable from the display module without removing the display module from the housing. The cited prior art does not disclose, teach or suggest display members which can be removed from the display module without removing the display module from the housing. Mabrey

states "one of the housing sides 99 is removable so that the display subassembly can be slid to one side and the name strips easily removed." Col. 7, Ins. 3-5. No other method of changing the name strips is disclosed by Mabrey. Ostrand requires removal of the inner frame from the outer frame to change the lettered strips. Col. 4, Ins. 8-11. Sharon and Stoddard are silent. Thus, claims 20-29, 32-38 and 48 are patentable over the cited patents.

4. Claims 32-34 and 44-51 are Patentable Over The Prior Art.

Claims 32-34 and 44-51 require a display module disposed in an opening of the housing and a door over the opening. None of the cited patents discloses a display module disposed in an opening of the housing and a door over the opening of the housing. Therefore, claims 32-34 and 44-51 are patentable over the cited prior art.

5. Claims 36-44 and 49-51 are Patentable Over The Prior Art

Claims 36-38 and 49-51 require the housing to have cavities, each cavity having a slot so that the attachment tabs may be inserted into the cavities via the slots in a direction substantially non-parallel to the panel when the display module is removably inserted into the opening. Claims 39-44 require inserting the tabs into the cavities in slots in a direction substantially non-parallel to the panel. In addition, claims 37, 38, 43, 50 and 51 have additional limitations directed towards the positioning of the display module in the opening which distinguish the prior art. None of the cited patents disclose the claimed structure or method. Therefore, claims 36-38 and 49-51 are patentable.

6. Additional Reasons for Patentability

A. Claims 20-29, 32-38, 41 and 45-51 are Patentable over Sharon in View of Ostrand Because the Combination of Sharon and Ostrand Does Not Produce the Claimed Frameless Display Module

Claims 20-29, 32-38, 41 and 45-51 require the display module to be frameless. The display modules of Sharon and Ostrand have frames, i.e., the opposite of

frameless. Therefore the rejection of the prior claims over Sharon in view of Ostrand was improper.

In the prior Office Action, the Examiner justified the rejection of claims over Sharon in view of Ostrand because the claimed display module is placed into housing 14, which is alleged to be a frame. Whether or not the housing could serve as a frame is irrelevant.

First, the adjustable menu board of Sharon has a frame, col. 2, Ins. 14-16, and the display module is meant to be mounted to an illuminating box, col. 1, Ins. 16-18. In addition, Ostrand discloses a building directory having an inner frame 22 holding lettered strips 20. The inner frame 22 is secured to outer frame 22. Thus, both Sharon and Ostrand disclose signs having two frames and not the claimed frameless display module in a housing.

Second, the combination of Sharon and Ostrand as described by the Examiner does not produce the claimed frameless display module according to the motivation proffered by the Examiner. As stated in the Office Action,

“Sharon discloses a frame to which retention members 36 are mounted. The device disclosed by Sharon has an open back. Ostrand teaches that it was known in the art to provide a rigid plate ... to provide greater rigidity to the frame. [...] The panel disclosed by Ostrand extends from one end of the frame to the other. [...] Thus retention members 36 would be attached to the panel.”

However, when the frame of Sharon is removed, which is necessary because the claimed display module is frameless, retention members 36 are necessarily not attached to the panel of Ostrand. Thus, the combination of Sharon and Ostrand does not provide a display module having a panel and “retention members secured to said panel” “wherein the display module is frameless” as required by the claims.

Therefore, claims 20-29, 32-38, 41 and 44-50 are patentable over Sharon in view of Ostrand in addition to the reasons previously described.

B. Claims 33, 35 and 44-51 Are Patentable Over Mabrey Because Mabrey Teaches Against a Substantially Translucent or Transparent Portion Over the Opening of the Housing

Claims 33, 35 and 44-51 require a substantially translucent or transparent portion over the opening of the housing. Mabrey teaches a sheet of "architectural glass having transmissivity of the order of 10 percent...." Col. 8, Ins. 1-3. Thus, claims 33, 35 and 44-51 are patentable over Mabrey in addition to the reasons previously described.

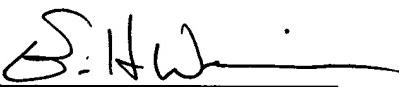
C. Claim 34 is Patentable Over Mabrey Because Mabrey Does Not Allow the Display Module to be Removed from the Front

Claim 34 requires the display module to be "removable from the opening through the front of the display device." Mabrey discloses that one of the housing sides 99 is removable so that the display subassembly can be slid within grooves 98 so that the name strips can be removed. Col. 7, Ins. 1-5. Grooves 98 prevent the display subassembly of Mabrey from being removed through the front. Consequently claim 34 is patentable over Mabrey in addition to the reasons previously described.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, all of the rejections have been overcome and claims 20-29 and 32-51 are allowable. An early indication of allowance is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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